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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 000059

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ELA, DRL/IRF

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/11/2030  
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [KIRF](#) [KISL](#) [SOCI](#) [EG](#)  
SUBJECT: UPPER EGYPT SECTARIAN ATTACK

CAIRO 00000059 001.3 OF 002

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Matthew Tueller for reason 1.4(a) and (d).

1. Key Points: -- (SBU) On January 7, gunmen armed with automatic weapons fired on Coptic Orthodox Christians as they were leaving Christmas M
2. (C) Comment: The attack on Coptic church-goers in Naga Hamadi is the worst incident of sectarian violence since January 2000, when attacks
3. (SBU) According to local media and Embassy contacts in Naga Hamadi, the attack began around 11:30 PM on January 7th, shortly after Christme
4. (SBU) Soon after the attack, the MoI announced that it had identified three suspects (Mohamed Ahmed Hassan "Hamam" Al Kamouny, Hedawy Al Se
5. (SBU) Bishop Kyrolis - as well as media commentators - immediately questioned the MoI's claim that the church attack was in revenge for the
6. (SBU) Coptic demonstrators clashed with police throughout the day on January 8, protesting inadequate security, with the local governor, a
7. (SBU) The GoE's statements so far have been limited to factual reports from the MoI and remarks by Sheik Mohamed Sayed Tantawi, the head of
8. (SBU) The GoE also announced that Public Prosecutor Abdel Maguid Mahmoud, Egypt's chief prosecutor, had traveled to Naga Hamadi to personal
9. (C) Embassy Economic-Political Minister Counselor spoke to Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Wael Aboul Magd on January 9 regardi